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ABSTRACT

The Spanish conquest of Mexico provides the context for this unit, designed for use with students in grades 9-12. It is intended that students will learn about the process of writing history and ways of assessing various historical accounts, and background about the Spanish conquistadors and the vanquished Aztec Indians. The unit contains four lessons. The first lesson teaches students that writing about a historical event, even from an eyewitness point of view, is quite difficult and often problematic. In the second lesson students learn the history of the Spanish conquest through a slide presentation of Indian and Spanish art. The third lesson teaches students that bias can affect historians' ways of seeing, and that one ought to study (if possible) historical texts written by various authors in order to acquire a better sense of historical events. Finally, a fourth lesson is provided for teachers to evaluate student progress. It is suggested that the lessons could be used in world history or language arts Background reading and recommended resources; and (3) Model curriculm standards. (DB)

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TWO VISIONS OF THE CONQUEST

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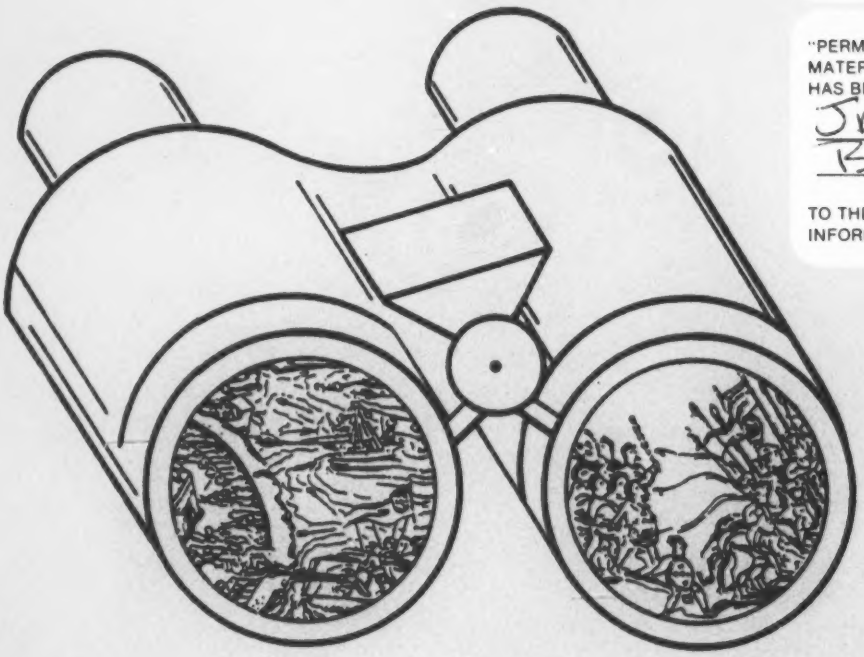

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TWO VISIONS OF THE CONQUEST

GRADES 9-12

LATIN AMERICA PROJECT
STANFORD PROGRAM ON INTERNATIONAL AND CROSS-CULTURAL EDUCATION
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RATIONALE AND UNIT OVERVIEW

The notion that "there are at least two sides to every story" is an idea frequently forgotten when studying history. Too often the textbook becomes a source of the "true" history and the important insight that written history is an interpretation of the past is lost. The purpose of this unit is to remind students that there are often competing theories of "truth."

The first lesson in this unit will teach students that writing about a historical event, even from an eyewitness point of view, is quite difficult and often problematic. Next, students will learn the history of the Spanish conquest through a slide presentation of Indian and Spanish art. The third lesson will teach students that bias can affect historians' ways of seeing, and that one ought to study (if possible) historical texts written by various authors in order to acquire a better sense of historical events. Finally, a fourth lesson is provided for teachers to evaluate student progress. The suggested evaluative questions are creative, yet useful in eliciting student knowledge. The Spanish conquest of Mexico provides the context for these lessons. In addition to learning about the process of writing history and ways of assessing the credibility of various historical accounts, students will also learn a great deal about the Spanish conquistadors and the vanquished Aztec Indians.

The lessons are organized sequentially in this unit; however, each lesson has been designed to stand independently. Therefore, you could select one, two, three, or all four lessons to include in your general curriculum.

Suggested Grade Levels: 9 to 12; with suggested adaptations for grades 7-8

Time: One week (approximately five hours)

Suggested courses: World History, Language Arts

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

KNOWLEDGE

Students will:

- learn names of people and places necessary for understanding the Spanish conquest (e.g., Cortés, Malinche, Moctezuma, Tenochtitlán).
- learn terms necessary for appraising historical narratives (e.g., fact, opinion, factual statement, value statement, bias, point of view, primary document, secondary document, value, value-laden).
- learn about the Spanish conquest of Mexico through visual representations.
- list similarities and differences between two historical accounts.
- distinguish beteen primary and secondary materials.
- give some reasons why Cortés was able to conquer Mexico.
- explain how the personal biases of two different writers affected their accounts of the conquest of Mexico.
- explain why historians should use accounts written from more than one point of view.

ATTITUDES

Students will:

- understand that history can be interpreted differently by different groups of people.
- become aware of the complexities in writing history.
- become aware of the many important contributions the Spanish and the Indians have made to Mexico's culture.
- learn that "getting all the facts" is a difficult task.
- understand the meaning of "bias."

SKILLS

Students will:

- learn to make important conceptual distinctions among key historical concepts.
- think about the kinds of practical and theoretical problems that historians confront.
- analyze several events from multiple perspectives.

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHERS

Below are some generalizations that should help teachers in thinking about this period of global convergence:

1. The Aztecs were but one of the many city-state groups that existed in the "New World" prior to and during the discovery of the Americas (1200-1521).

2. The conquest of Mexico was not due to one particular event, but to a combination of many factors: among others, the lack of indigenous resistance to diseases brought by the Spaniards, and the Spanish mastery of forging alliances between groups.

3. Motives for Spanish exploration, conquest and colonization reflected late fifteenth and sixteenth-century (medieval) Spanish society and included a desire to gain adventure, honor, wealth and glory, to win commercial advantages for Spain, and to convert more souls to the Catholic Church.

4. The expansion of the Spanish Empire was triggered in part by the desire to increase "spice" wealth and to break the monopoly of Egypt and Venice over spice trade. Moreover, the discovery of America was not intentional, but occurred as a result of efforts by the Spaniards and Portuguese to find a sea route to the East.

5. The conquest of Mexico was followed by a process of religious domination, in which Indian gods and rites were replaced by Catholic gods and rituals.

TEXTBOOK CROSS-REFERENCES

This unit may be used independently or in conjunction with textbooks. While this list is non-inclusive, some textbooks that **TWO VISIONS OF THE CONQUEST** may be used with include:

Bower, Bert. Latin America and Canada Lexington, MA.: D.C. Heath and Company, 1987. (Unit 1, 3)

Gutiérrez, Patricia. History and Life Palo Alto, CA.: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1977. (Chapters 14, 21, 22)

Lee, Susan Dye. Exploring Our World: Latin America and Canada Chicago: Follett Publishing Company, 1980. (Unit 3, 5)

Mazour, Anatole G. People and Nations San Francisco: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1983. (Chapter 16)

Schreiber, Joan. Western Hemisphere: Latin America and Canada Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1983. (Chapters 4, 6, 7)

LESSON ONE: WHAT IS HISTORY?

Objectives

Students will

- define the word "bias."
- think critically about the question "what is history?"
- analyze a staged classroom event from multiple perspectives.
- learn that "getting all the facts" is a difficult task.

Time: One or Two class periods.

Materials

A blackboard or butcher paper
Directions for Teacher: Handout #1A
Directions for Student B: Handout #1B
Directions for Student C: Handout #1C

Introduction

This activity encourages students to think about the concept of "bias" and to understand that interpreting "what happened" in an historical event is a difficult and complex process. Students will watch an unexpected event take place and then write the history of what they saw. Students who were out of the room during the staged event will try to decide what "really happened."

Suggested Procedures

1. Tell the students that they are about to begin a new unit on the history of the conquest of Mexico. In this unit an important concept is "bias." Ask students what they think the word "bias" means and write their definitions and synonyms on the blackboard or on butcher paper. Keep looking for definitions of the word until the group brings out the following notions:

Bias: preference or inclination that inhibits an impartial statement; point of view where something is obviously favored, even distorted.

2. Next, have students tell stories about a time in which they exhibited bias. These stories could be quite personal and controversial or impersonal and mundane. For example, ask students how they decide which team to root for in the world series or superbowl. Generally, one roots for the home team. If one's home team is not in the championship playoff then other factors are

taken into account (e.g., a favorite player or the city closest to the student's home).

3. At some point during this activity stop for one moment to send two students on an errand: e.g., to the front office. These students will then miss the "staged event." See **Handout #1A** for more complete directions.

4. Resume the activity and at a pre-selected cue have two students perform a prescribed activity (this will have to be arranged prior to class, but should not take too much preparation). What the event might look like is described in **Handout #1A**. Of course, you may choose to do something entirely different. **(A suggested adaptation for this lesson is provided at the end of the "Suggested Procedures" section for teachers who do not think that student involvement in this phase of the activity will work.)**

5. When the event ends, tell students that their task is to "write the history of what just happened." Students may ask a great deal of questions about this task, but do not give them too many clues. Simply tell them that they are to write the history of the event to the best of their abilities. They should include whatever they think is important in understanding what happened, and they should be specific in their details. Although students may not remember everything that was written on the blackboard, encourage them to write down as much as they can remember. The students who were part of the event should also write the history.

6. When the two students on the errand return, tell them that an event just took place, and that their chore is to figure out what happened. Explain that the other students are writing the history of the event and will read them aloud. The two "errand" students are to try and decide what they think really happened. (Either all of the histories may be read aloud, or a representative sample--until no new knowledge can be added. The two students may want to read all of the histories for homework and report back the next day. If so, they should be excluded from the debriefing activity.)

7. Debrief activity.

After reading all or many of the historical narratives, students will notice that different people observed different aspects of the event. List what people saw on the blackboard. As a beginning point you may want to concentrate on what was written on the blackboard. Undoubtedly, you will find incomplete and even contradictory answers. Next, ask students why they think different people saw different things. **Some answers should include 1) <u>Location</u>: where students were sitting influenced what they could see or hear. 2) <u>Bias</u>: Students have written down what they think are the important details. Point out, however, that even innocuous details often contain biases. For example, writing down what time an event took place reflects the bias of a culture that values time as an**

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important criterion. Other biases may also be reflected in the students' accounts. As mentioned below, writing decisions force students to omit certain information. The decisions regarding which information to include and which to exclude reflects students' ideas (biases) about what they think is most important. Attention: some were paying more attention than others. Some students may say that they didn't know what to watch, while others may complain that they weren't watching until too late, or that they could not hear what was being said. 3) Perceptual Bias: it is difficult if not impossible to see and hear everything. Students consciously and unconsciously heed some factors over others. Point out that this kind of bias differs from the notion of bias discussed earlier. 4) Memory: some students may forget certain actions.

Other topics concerning the writing of history include:
5) Writing decisions: students must decide what is important to include in the history. Some details seem trivial; writing down all the details is uninteresting. Also you may want to point out to students that when historians cannot decide what "really happened" they often include competing hypotheses in their essays.
6) Cooperation: historians depend on each other for information.
7) Where is history?: as a thinking question you may want to ask students where history exists? In other words, does history exist if no one writes it down? Is it possible to ever conclude "what really happened" if whatever we see and hear is always limited to a certain perspective--the human perspective?

With the two "errand" students present (this may take place the next day), ask them what they think really happened? How did they reach their conclusions? Are they absolutely sure of their decisions? Why or why not?

Suggested Adaptation

Instead of involving students in the "staged event," you could choose to perform an outrageous act yourself. For example, you could break from the discussion of bias and begin to recite a lecture that you were planning for another course. Write one or two sentences on the blackboard. Pause a few seconds and then erase what you just wrote. Then acting flustered or disturbed, stop the lecture and walk out of the room.

Handout #1A

Teacher's Directions for Staged Event

Pre-arrange with two students an event that will take place at an agreed upon cue near the beginning of the class. Designate one person **student B** and the other **student C:** (the letters "B" and "C" are used to coincide with handouts B and C).

Begin the class by telling students that they are about to start a new unit on the conquest of Mexico. Review the concept "bias" with students by having them define the word and then by having them give examples of times when they exhibited bias. Next, send two students on some kind of errand (e.g., to the front office) so that they will be away for at least two or three minutes. Then resume the "bias" activity by asking students for more examples of bias.

At a specified cue (e.g., when you scratch your right ear or perhaps when you call on **student B** to relate a story) have **student B** get out of her or his chair, walk to the chalkboard and write the words "By 1500, the Aztec empire stretched to almost every part of Mexico." **Student B** should sit down, wait for a few seconds and then return to the blackboard to erase what was written.

While **student B** writes on the chalkboard, have **student C** get into an argument with you. The argument could be about anything. For instance, **student C** could say to you, "I don't like this lesson. I'm not learning anything." Then you could reply with shock and outrage, "I have never been so insulted. What do you mean that you do not like this lesson?" **Student C** could respond with, "Well, I just feel that I am wasting my time." Continue the exchange for a short time and then as seriously as possible state, "I have never been so insulted. If you feel that you can do better, then do so. I am leaving!" Then walk out of the room.

Wait a few seconds, return to the room and then tell students to get out their pens and paper and to write what just happened.

When you prepare for the lesson with the two students, do not tell either one of them too much about the activity of the other. Therefore, they too will be surprised. Also remind them that they cannot make a mistake in this activity. If the staged activity does not go according to plans, the activity will still work. Just the history will change.

(See the "suggested adaptation" section for an alternative to using students in the staged event.)

Handout #1B

Directions for Student B.

Your role is to take place in a historical event. At a prearranged time (your teacher will tell you when) get out of your seat, walk to the front of the classroom and write on the blackboard "By 1500, the Aztec empire stretched to almost every part of Mexico." Either memorize this sentence or write it down on a small piece of paper. Try not to smile or look at your classmates. Pretend that everything is absolutely normal.

While you are writing on the blackboard, another student will be performing a different activity, but don't pay attention to this. When you have finished writing the sentence "By 1500, the Aztec empire stretched to almost every part of Mexico," return to your seat. Next, acting as though you just remembered something, return to the blackboard and erase what you just wrote so that no one can read it anymore. Then return to your seat, again, without smiling or looking at your classmates.

Handout #1C

Directions for Student C.

Your role is to take place in a historical event. At a prearranged time another student will get out of his or her seat and go to the blackboard. While this student begins to write on the blackboard, you should disrupt the class by getting into an argument with your teacher. The argument could be about anything. You and your teacher should decide before class what you will argue about. For example, the argument could be about the lesson itself. Say to your teacher, "I don't like this lesson. I'm not learning anything." Then your teacher might reply with mock shock and outrage, "I have never been so insulted. What do you mean that you do not like this lesson?" Then you could say, "Well, I just feel that I am wasting my time." Continue the exchange for a short time. Your teacher will end the conversation by walking out of the room.

It is impossible to make a mistake in this activity. So don't worry too much about what you are going to say.

LESSON TWO: VISUALIZING THE CONQUEST

Objectives

Students will:

- learn about the Spanish conquest of Mexico through visual representations.
- understand the historical significance of Cortés, Malinche and Moctezuma.
- be able to compare and contrast Aztec and Spanish visual representations.

Materials

Slide projector and screen
Handout #2A: Script on the conquest

Suggested Procedures

1. A leading question and a short paragraph corresponds to each slide. While projecting the slides, ask students the questions listed in the script. Spend time soliciting student impressions and encouraging class discussion. **(Be sure to see Appendix I for help on pronouncing difficult names.)** You may want to ask questions other than those on the script or at other times you may not want to ask any questions at all. **(Questions are provided for every slide, but use only those that you feel are appropriate.)** At the onset of the activity, students may have a difficult time deciding whether an Indian or a Spaniard painted a particular scene, but after a while they should catch on.

   One adaptation of this exercise is to begin by reading the script yourself and then to pass the script around the room for students to read. In this case, you may want to xerox the **Pronunciation Key** and have students study the pronunciations before the slide show.

2. If there is time remaining, ask the students leading questions and have them repeat the story of the conquest back to you. For example, you could begin by asking, "Who was Cortés?" "What did he do?" "Where did he start out from?" "Why did he go to Mexico?" "What happened when he got there?" And so on until the students, as a group, retell the story of the conquest.

Script on the Conquest

1. Hernando Cortés: WHAT TYPE OF PERSON IS THIS? WHO PAINTED THIS PICTURE, A SPANIARD OR AN INDIAN?

Since Columbus' initial "discovery" of America in 1492, the Spaniards made further efforts to explore other parts of the Caribbean and colonized the islands of Hispañola (today Haiti and the Dominican Republic) and Cuba. It was in Cuba that an ambitious captain of the Spanish military, Hernando Cortés, began his commercial expedition. This is a painting by a European artist of Cortés in his military costume. After spending six years in Cuba, he assembled a group of 550 men, 16 horses and 11 ships and against the orders of the Cuban governor set sail on a commercial venture to discover "riches and glory" on the Mexican mainland.

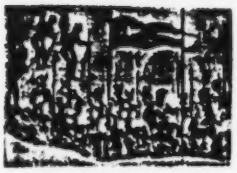
2. Spaniards Landing at Veracruz: WHO DO YOU THINK PAINTED THIS? HOW DOES IT DEPICT CORTES' LANDING? WHICH ONES ARE THE SPANIARDS? THE INDIANS?

After sailing off the coast of the Yucatán Peninsula, Cortés landed at Veracruz in March 1519 and claimed the area along with everything he would soon discover for the Spanish Empire. This Indian painting of the Spanish arrival depicts an initial confrontation between an Aztec warrior and an armored Spaniard. The Aztecs had never seen such huge ships before and referred to them as "towers or small mountains floating on the waves of the sea."*

In order to be successful in his conquest of the Aztecs, Cortés and his relatively small band of men had to rely on help from native tribes who were enemies of the Aztecs. One way these tribes initially helped the Spaniards was by providing guides and women. Doña Marina or Malinche served as a guide, a translator, and a companion to Cortés.

* Miguel Leon-Portilla, The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico, Boston: Beacon Press, 1966, p. 13. Hereafter, quotes from this book will be noted by page number only.

From the union of Spaniards and native tribes came the first Mestizo, an entirely new race.



3. Cortés and Allies Marching Inland: WHO PAINTED THIS? HOW ARE THE SPANISH PORTRAYED? THE INDIANS?
After establishing a base of operations in Veracruz and hearing tales of the rich capital of Tenochtitlán, Cortés began the 200 mile journey inland to the heart of the Aztec Empire. Before leaving Veracruz, however, he sunk all his ships so that his men had no chance to question his authority or have second thoughts about the dangerous expedition. Here we see an Indian depiction of the armed Spaniards and their heavily burdened Indian allies marching inland. Note Malinche leading the group.

4. Route of Cortés: LOCATE VERACRUZ AND TENOCHTITLAN ON THE MAP. IN WHICH DIRECTION DID CORTES AND HIS MEN MARCH? THROUGH WHICH INDIAN CITIES DID THEY PASS?
On this map of Mexico we can see the 200 mile journey from the steamy tropics of Veracruz west to the chilly highland of Tenochtitlán at 7,500 feet.

5. Cortés Meets Tlaxcalans: WHERE IS CORTES? WHERE IS MALINCHE? WHO ARE THEY TALKING WITH?
After initial violent contacts with various Indian tribes, Cortés made a pact with the Tlaxcalan Indians at Cempoala. The Tlaxcalans were vehement enemies of the Aztecs and were eager to join the Spanish expedition to conquer Tenochtitlán. Here we see an Indian portrayal of Cortés meeting with the Tlaxcalans. Malinche is at Cortés' side translating. The Indians had never seen white men before and we have this record of their first impressions:

"'The strangers' bodies are completely covered, so that only their faces can be seen. Their skin is white, as if it were made of lime. They have yellow hair, though some of them have black. Their beards are long and yellow, and their moustaches are also yellow. Their hair is curly, with very fine fine strands."(16)

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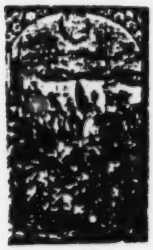
6. Cortés Entering Tenochtitlán: DID AN INDIAN OR A SPANIARD PAINT THIS? HOW DOES THE ARTIST WANT US TO THINK OF CORTES' ENTRANCE INTO TENOCHTITLAN?



Cortés and his men camped 60 miles from Tenochtitlán until word came from Moctezuma II, the Aztec emperor, that they were to be welcomed into the city. The Spaniards climbed the snowy passes between the volcanic peaks of Popocatépetl and Iztlaxihuatl and had their first glimpse of the magnificent city of Tenochtitlán. Here a European artist has shown Cortés and his men riding confidently into the capital. Despite all their armor and horses, the Spaniards were most likely filled with anxiety and fear as they entered the city.

7. Spanish Horsemen Entering Tenochtitlán: WHO ARE THESE MEN? HOW DOES THE ARTIST WANT US TO THINK ABOUT THESE PEOPLE?

The Indian account of the Spanish entering Tenochtitlán is as follows: "They came in battle array, as conquerors, and the dust rose in whirlwinds on the roads. Their spears glinted in the sun, and their pennons fluttered like bats. They made a loud clamor as they marched, for their coats of mail and their weapons clashed and rattled. Some of them were dressed in glistening iron from head to foot; they terrified everyone who saw them." (41)

8. Spanish Horses: WHO DREW THIS? WHAT DO YOU THINK THE INDIANS THOUGHT OF THE SPANISH HORSES?

The Spaniards were the first people to bring the horse to America. This reinforced the Indian's belief that the Spaniards were gods. Here is an Aztec account of the new beast: "These stags, these horses snort and bellow. They sweat a very great deal, the sweat pours from their bodies in streams. The foam from their muzzles drips onto the ground. It spills out in fat drops, like a lather of amole [plant used as soap]. They make a loud noise when they run; they make a great din, as if stones were raining on the earth. Then the ground is pitted and scarred where they set down their hooves. It opens wherever their hooves touch it." (ix)

9. Moctezuma carried to Meeting with Cortés: WHO ARE THE PEOPLE IN THIS PICTURE? WHO DO YOU SUPPOSE IS BEING CARRIED UNDER THE CANOPY?

When Cortés had entered the city he went directly to meet Moctezuma. When he tried to clasp Moctezuma's hand, however, royal Aztec guards politely but firmly directed him away from the Emperor. No one was allowed to touch the great god-king. Actually, Moctezuma was quite afraid and confused about Cortés' arrival. Recall that Moctezuma had adopted the religion of the Toltecs which predicted that in the fifth sun (early 1500's) the white god Quetzalcóatl would come back to earth and destroy evil. Moctezuma was certain that Cortés, a white man from a strange land with a yellow beard, was Quetzalcóatl and that he should obey this newly arrived god.

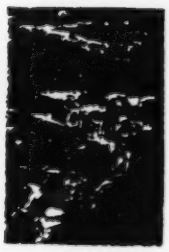
10. Aztecs Defeat the Spaniards: WHO IS BEING DEFEATED BY WHOM? WHO DREW THIS PICTURE?

After staying in the city for six months, Cortés left Tenochtitlán in late 1519 for Veracruz in hopes of recruiting more men so that he would have a fighting chance of conquering the Aztecs and taking their riches. While he was gone, however, disaster broke out. For reasons not altogether understood by historians, the Spaniards left behind in Tenochtitlán attacked the Aztecs during an important festival dance. When Cortés returned to Tenochtitlán with twice as many men as his first expedition (*) he found his men under siege by the Aztecs. He was allowed, however, to enter the city. The Aztecs had successfully led him into a trap and they began a fierce attack on the Spaniards. It was difficult for the mounted Spaniards to maneuver in the narrow stone streets of Tenochtitlán, so despite their superior weaponry they were beaten and forced to retreat from the city. Many Spaniards were killed by the Aztecs and many more drowned in the water surrounding the city as they greedily tried to escape with large amounts of gold. On July 1, 1520 the Aztecs achieved their great victory as portrayed in this

slide by an Aztec artist. To the Spanish this battle has become known as "la Noche Triste" (The Sad Night). It was also during "La Noche Triste" that Moctezuma was killed.

(*) The reinforcements that Cortés brought back with him comprised men sent out by the governor of Cuba to bring Cortés back. Cortés had to defeat these men in battle before they joined his group.

11. Spaniards attack Tenochtitlán: WHO PAINTED THIS PORTRAYAL OF THE CONQUEST? HOW DOES THE PAINTER WANT US TO THINK OF THE SPANIARDS? THE AZTECS?



The Spaniards withdrew to Veracruz where Cortés, in a stroke of military genius, ordered his men and their Indian allies to disassemble a number of recently arrived Spanish ships and transport them overland to Lake Texcoco where they would be used for a waterborne attack on Tenochtitlán.
With 900 men, 86 horses and 13 vessels the Spaniards attacked Tenochtitlán in May of 1521. While Spanish foot soldiers and horsemen attacked the city by entering its causeways, other assaulted the capital with boats. Just as the attack began, a heavy wind blew the boats towards the island city with such speed that many Aztec canoes were simply swamped.

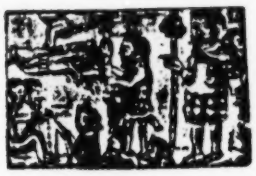
12. Boats Attack Tenochtitlán: WHO DREW THIS PICTURE? HOW DID THE ARTIST FEEL ABOUT THE BOATS AND CANNONS?

The Aztecs were horrified and eventually demoralized by the superior naval strength and cannon fire of the Spaniards.

13. Aztecs Attempt to Capture Cortés: HOW DOES THIS ARTIST WANT US TO THINK OF THE AZTEC WARRIORS? WHAT IS HAPPENING TO THE SPANIARD IN THE CENTER OF THE PAINTING?

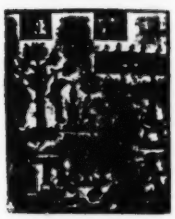
This Spanish artist portrayed the Aztecs overwhelming the Spaniards and almost succeeding in carrying Cortés away. Although the Aztecs fought bravely, the superior military capability of the Spanish enabled them to surround the city and hold it in siege. Now it would be only a matter of time before the island city would have to surrender.

14. Aztecs Flee the Conquistadors: WHO PAINTED THIS PICTURE? WHAT IS HAPPENING? WHY?
This Aztec painting graphically portrays the depth of human suffering caused by the Spanish siege of Tenochtitlán. An Indian account reads: "When the [Spanish] ships approached...the common people were terrified at the sight. They gathered their children into canoes and fled helter-skelter across the lake, moaning with fear and paddling as swiftly as they could. They left all their possessions behind them and abandoned their little farms without looking back." (96)



15. Bloody Warfare: WHO PAINTED THIS PICTURE? WHY?
This Aztec picture shows the bloodshed of the Conquest, an aspect most European artists ignore in their glorification of the Conquest.

16. Confusion and Violence: WHO PAINTED THIS? WHY?
Again, note the emphasis in this Aztec painting on the violence and confusion of the Conquest. Here two Indians are hanged; an Aztec and a Spaniard drown while a priest looks on. After three months the Spaniards made a final offensive and conquered the city on August 21, 1521. The once mighty Aztec capital was left in ruins. The sorrows of defeat are expressed in the following lines of an Aztec poem:

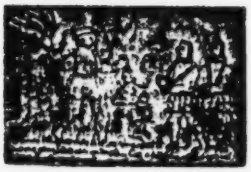


"Broken spears lie in the roads;
we have torn our hair in our grief.
The houses are roofless now, and their walls are red with blood." (132)

17. Idealization of Conquered Empire: WHO PAINTED THIS? HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE WHAT IS HAPPENING HERE? DO YOU THINK THIS IS AN ACCURATE PICTURE OF THE CONQUERED AZTEC EMPIRE?

This Spanish artist shows the newly conquered Empire as a land of festivities where Indians merrily dance about and Spaniards nobly ride through the countryside. Note the Spanish castles dreamily appearing in the clouds above the new colony.

18. Indian Being Whipped: THIS SLIDE SHOWS A DIFFERENT IMPRESSION OF THE AZTEC EMPIRE AFTER THE CONQUEST. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE? WHO DREW THIS SKETCH?

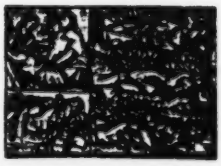


The Indians' lives would never be the same after 1521. A harsh new reality now faced the Indians--as a conquered people they were subjected to the rule of a distant European country anxious to colonize and Christianize the "barbarians." Here we see a Spaniard whipping a native prisoner in a sketch made by an Indian. Whole towns of Indians were forced to labor in gold and silver mines for the Spaniards.

19. Smallpox Epidemic: WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THESE INDIANS? HOW DID IT HAPPEN?

Although many Indians died in the actual battles of the Conquest, many more actually died of disease. Here we see a number of Indians suffering from smallpox, a disease unknown to the Aztecs until the arrival of the Spaniards. An Aztec writes:

"Sores erupted on our faces, our breasts, our bellies; we were covered with agonizing sores from head to foot.



"The illness was so dreadful that none of us could walk or move. The sick were so utterly helpless that they could only lie on their beds like corpses, unable to move their limbs, or even their heads. They could not lie face down or roll from one side to the other. If they did move their bodies, they screamed with pain."

A great many died of hunger. "They could not get up to search for food and everyone was too sick to care for them, so they starved to death in their beds." (93)

20. Christianization of the Indians: WHERE ARE THE INDIANS IN THIS PICTURE? THE SPANIARDS? WHAT IS THE RELATION BETWEEN THE SPANIARDS AND THE INDIANS?

This Indian painting shows another important aspect of the new reality faced by the conquered empire; Spanish priests were eager to consolidate the conquest and Christianize the unconverted. Here we see a priest with a small parish of Indians protecting them against evil demons which lurk near the gathering. Another friar attempts to convert two Indians.

Christianity, disease, and slavery were some of the new conditions facing the Indians as the Conquest ended and the colonial period began. It has been said that the Conquest itself was neither a victory nor a defeat, but only the painful beginning of a new society.

21. Half-Covered Activity Slide of Spaniard: (Optional) The purpose of this activity slide is to allow students a chance to apply their "visual literacy." Have the students look at this slide and tell them to complete the drawing. They will have to fill in the picture with what they perceive to be the missing parts.

22. Activity Slide of Spaniard: (Optional) When they have completed their drawings, have them look at this completed Indian portrayal of a mounted Spaniard. Ask them:

a. How does this compare with what you have drawn?
b. What three important things does this picture tell us about the Conquest? **This Indian painting shows three elements of the Conquest: the sword, the horse, and the cross.**
c. Would a Spanish painting of the same object be the same? Why? **Probably not. A Spanish rendition would most likely glorify or romanticize the conquistador.**

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LESSON THREE: THE "TRUE HISTORY" OF THE CONQUEST OF MEXICO

Objectives

Students will:

- define value statement, factual statement, city-state.
- give some reasons why Cortés was able to conquer Mexico.
- distinguish between "fact," "inference," and "opinion"; "factual statement" and "value statement."
- explain how the personal biases of two different writers affected their accounts of the conquest of Mexico.
- explain why historians should use accounts written from more than one point of view.
- distinguish between primary and secondary documents.

Time: two class periods

Materials

Handout 3A: Cortés' Route to the Aztec Capital
Handout 3B: Capital of the Aztec Empire
Handout 3C: Account of Bernal Díaz del Castillo
Handout 3D: Account of Fernando De Alva Ixtlilxóchitl
Handout 3E: Impact Questionnaire on Readings
Handout 3F: Discussion Questions
Butcher paper or blackboard

Suggested Procedures

1. Provide the following introductory information to the entire class and distribute copies of **Handouts #3A** and **#3B**. Point out that Díaz wrote from the point of view of the Spanish soldiers, while De Alva's account is representative of the position of the Indian allies of Cortés.

   The following accounts of the Spanish conquest of Mexico were written by two different men. The first narrative is by Bernal Díaz del Castillo who took part in the conquest as one of the soldiers of Cortés. Many years later, after the war had ended, he read an account of the conquest that had been written by a Spanish historian who had never been to Mexico. Díaz was angry because of the way this history was written, and decided to complete his own account, which he had been writing; he entitled it, A True History of the Conquest of New Spain. Díaz felt that his was a true history, because he had actually seen and participated in the events that he was describing.

   Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxóchitl also wanted to set the record straight about the conquest. De Alva was a descendent of Ixtlilxóchitl, an Indian ruler who had fought on the side of

the Spanish during the conquest. De Alva's account of the conquest was part of a much larger work describing the history of the Indians. De Alva wrote his account after a thorough study of the Indian records, and after talking with several old Indians who were famous for their own historical knowledge. He attached an official certificate to his history. In this certificate the officials of the Province of Otumba testified that everything which was written in his history "is certain and true" and in conformity with the ancient records.

2. After providing students with the preceding information, have students, in small groups, define the following concepts:

bias: (optional) preference or inclination that inhibits a impartial statement; point of view where something is obviously favored, even distorted.
fact: a thing that actually exists; it is certain and can be verified, although not necessarily value-free. Facts can be used to present a certain point of view.
inference: the process of reaching a conclusion (that may or may not be true) from facts or judgements. The statement "if there is smoke then there is a fire," is an inference.
opinion: judgement or appraisal formed in the mind about a particular matter. An opinion expresses how a person <u>feels</u> about something or what a person <u>thinks</u> is true. Opinions may be based on facts but are only interpretations.
point of view: position from which something is seen, considered or evaluated.
primary document: an official paper (e.g., letter, manuscript) written or drafted during the time of study.
secondary document: an account of some historical event(s) using primary documents as resources in order to establish a credible narrative (i.e., most history books).
value: something held with high esteem or worth; component of an attitude.
value-laden: something pervaded by values: i.e., a point of view can be value-laden.

Next, have each group report their definitions. Continue the discussion until definitions match or come close to the ones provided above.

3. Ask the students the following question, and list their answers on the blackboard or on butcher paper:

What do you think are the probable biases of Castillo and of De Alva?

4. Provide the entire class with as much of the following background information that you think is needed:

In 1519 Hernando Cortés landed on the coast of Mexico. He found that the Indian city-states along the coast were led by other Indians known as Aztecs or Mexicans, whose capital was located on a lake in the interior of the country (see map provided, **Handout 3A**). Cortés was particularly impressed by the presents which the Aztec ruler, Moctezuma, sent him, especially since these presents included gold and jewelry. Aided by an Indian woman who acted as an interpreter, Cortés and his soldiers marched to the capital. On their way they encountered many Indian groups, some of whom they conquered by fighting. Many of these Indians then became their allies.

Indian groups were organized in **city-states**: a set of complex relationships between various groups, involving alliances and also relationships of exploitation, domination and subordination. In the course of about 150 years, the Aztecs had managed to move from a relatively low position in the system of city-state relationships to a position of domination. However, this position could only be maintained through the assistance of allied neighbors as well as the subordination of others.

Moctezuma, the Aztec ruler, had received reports of the arrival of these strangers. He was terrified by what he heard. The Spaniards had weapons, horses and cannons that the Indians had never seen before. Moctezuma did not attempt to fight them, but instead welcomed them and gave them presents. For a while the Spaniards lived in the capital. But many of the Aztecs were unhappy with the conduct of the Spanish, particularly when the latter took Moctezuma prisoner and killed many Aztecs during a celebration. Fighting broke out in which Moctezuma and nearly a third of the Spaniards were killed. The rest fled the city, taking refuge among their Indian allies in Tlaxcala. The Spaniards regrouped their forces and returned to the capital once again. This time the Aztecs were prepared to fight them. Since the Aztec capital was located on a lake, Cortés' forces laid siege to the city, cutting off their food supply. They then began advancing along the causeways that connected the city with the mainland (see **Handout #3B**).

In the accounts that follow, Díaz and De Alva tell how Cortés reviewed his groups before laying siege to the city, and then describe some of the fighting that took place on the causeway. Among Cortés' Indian allies were those from Tlaxcala and Texcoco; Ixtlilxóchitl was the leader from Texcoco.

5. Divide the class into two groups and give each group a different historical account (provided in **Handouts #3C** and **#3D**). Have the two groups read the accounts separately and provide each group with the questions in **Handout #3E**.

6. **Homework assignment.** Have the students answer the questions in **Handout #3E** individually and prepare for a group discussion of their answers on the following day.

7. Reassemble the groups, and have each of the two groups advocate for their positions with evidence provided by the text.

   There are at least three ways to facilitate this exercise. One way is by writing students' answers from **Handout #3E** on the blackboard and continuing a discussion from these responses. A second way, which might be useful for older students, is to provide all students with **Handouts #3C** and **#3D** (although students will only be responsible for writing one account in **Handout #3E**). Finally, you might decide to have students work in small groups. Each group would consist of students who read Castillo and De Alva's accounts.

8. Discuss the questions provided in **Handout #3F.**

9. **Extended Activities:**

   *Ask students to examine their textbook and analyze how the conquest of Mexico is covered.

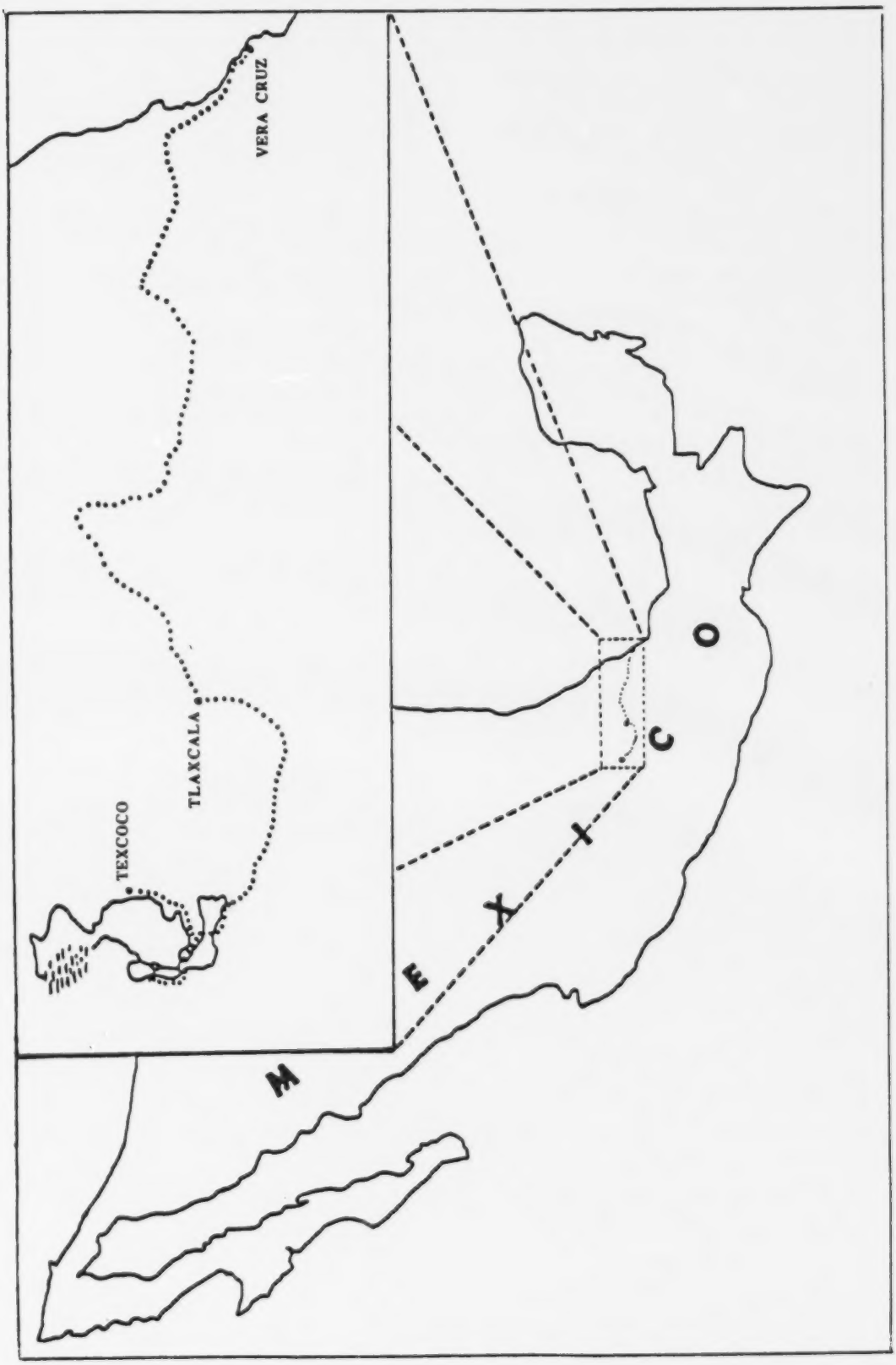
   *Students could construct the Aztec point of view, as a group writing project.

10. **Suggested Adaptation:**

    One suggestion for adapting this lesson for lower grade levels is to summarize and tell the two stories in your own words. Then have students try to decide which story is more believable.

Sources: Adapted from material prepared by the World History Project Staff at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana., 1973.

CORTES' ROUTE TO THE AZTEC CAPITAL



LAKE
TEXCOCO
•Texcoco
Tepeaca
Tacuba
CAUSEWAY
CAUSEWAY
CAUSEWAY
Iztapalapa
Coyoacan
☆ Capital of Aztec Empire

Handout #3C

Account of Bernal Diaz Del Castillo

"Cortés decided that on the second day of the Feast of the Holy Spirit a review should be held in the great courts of Texcoco. Eighty-four horsemen were present, and six hundred and fifty soldiers with sword and shield and many with lances, and a hundred and ninety-four crossbowmen and musketeers.

"I was with Pedro de Alvarado, and I will relate what we did in our camp. We pushed forward along our causeway, and pushed ahead as far as the first bridge, the crossbowmen and musketeers working together, some loading while the others fired. During the fight, the enemy discharged upon us so many stones from their slings, so many darts, and so many arrows that although all our soldiers wore armor they were wounded on the head and body, and a bitter battle went on until the night parted us.

"We fought in this way every day, and our horses were of little use on the causeways. For if they charged or pursued the enemy's bands, the Aztecs immediately jumped into the water. Moreover, those horsemen who owned their mounts were unwilling to risk them, for at that time horses cost eight hundred or even a thousand and more pesos, and were not to be had.

"I will now go on to speak of the severe fighting that was all the time going on in Cortés' camp and in Gonzalo De Sandoval's. But by far the heavier engagements were fought by Cortés. For he had ordered that all houses should be pulled down and burnt and the bridged channels filled up; and what he gained each day was thus consolidated. He sent an order to Pedro De Alvarado to be sure that we never crossed a bridge or gap in the causeway without first blocking it up, and to pull down and burn every house. Then we had to fill up the gaps and bridges with the mud-bricks and timber of the demolished houses; and our Tlaxcalan allies helped us manfully in all this warfare.

"Seeing that all of us together fighting, filling in, and keeping watch was very hard labor, Cortés decided that the next day we were to advance with all possible strength from all three camps, horsemen, crossbowmen, musketeers, and soldiers, and push forward into the great market square. When all was ready, and warnings had been sent to our Tlaxcalan allies, the men of Texcoco and those of the other towns who were to bring their canoes to help our launches, we started from our camp on Sunday morning after mass. The Aztecs fought like brave men, but Cortés made great gains. As for us, we had already captured another barricade and bridge. Cortés and his men captured a deepish water-opening with a very narrow causeway across it, which the Aztecs had constructed most cunningly. Then, as bad fortune follows on good and great disasters

succeed great prosperity, so in his headlong pursuit of the enemy, either out of carelessness or because Our Lord permitted it, Cortés and his men omitted to fill in the channel they had captured. When the Aztecs saw him cross that channel without filling it in, they were highly delighted. They had assembled great bands of warriors under very valiant captains and posted many canoes on the lake in places where our launches could not reach them. All was prepared for the moment when such a furious army of shrieking, shouting, and whistling Aztecs fell on Cortés and his men that they could not stand up to the shock of their charge. Our soldiers, captains, and standard-bearers then decided to retreat in good order. But the enemy continued to charge them furiously, and drove them back to that difficult crossing. Meanwhile our Indian allies, of who Cortés had brought great numbers, were so confused that they turned and fled, offering no resistance. On seeing them run away in disorder Cortés tried to hearten them with cries of: "Stop, stop, gentlemen! Stand firm! What do you mean by turning your backs?" But he could not halt them.

"Then, at that gap in the causeway which they had neglected to fill, on that little, narrow, broken causeway, the Aztecs, aided by their canoes, defeated Cortés, wounding him in the leg, taking sixty-six of his soldiers alive, and killing eight horses. Six or seven Mexican captains had already seized our Captain. Then in the nick of time, that very valiant soldier Cristóbal De Olea came up to him and, seeing Cortés held by so many Indians, promptly killed four of them with mighty thrusts of his sword; and another brave soldier called Lerma helped him. Such was the personal bravery of these two men that the Indian captains let Cortés go. But in defending him Olea lost his life and Lerma was almost killed. Then many other soldiers rushed up and, although badly wounded, grasped Cortés and pulled him out of his dangerous position in the mud. Meanwhile the Mexican warriors went on fighting very bravely and successfully from the rooftops, inflicting great damage on us; and they continued to pursue Cortés and his men until they had driven them back to camp.

"Many companies of Aztecs came down the causeway where we were fighting, wounding us all, including the horsemen. Sandoval too received a stone full in the face. As so many bands were coming on, and only I and twenty soldiers were opposing them, Sandoval ordered us to retire gradually in order to save the horses. Facing the enemy and never turning our backs, we gradually retired, forming a kind of dam to hold their advance. Some of our crossbowmen and musketeers shot while others were loading, the horsemen made charges, and Pedro Moreno loaded and fired his cannon. Yet despite the number of Aztecs that were swept away by his shot we could not keep them at bay.

"When we had retired almost to our quarters, across a great opening full of water, their arrows, darts, and stones could no longer reach us. The dismal drum of their god sounded again, accompanied by conches, horns, and trumpet-like instruments. It was a terrifying sound, and when we looked at the tall pyramid from which it came we saw our comrades who had been captured in Cortés' defeat being dragged up the steps to be sacrificed. When they had hauled them up to a small platform in front of the shrine where they kept their accursed idols we saw them put plumes on the heads of many of them; and then they made them dance. Then they laid them down on their backs on some narrow stones of sacrifice and, cutting open their chests, drew out their palpitating hearts which they offered to the idols before them. Then they kicked the bodies down the steps, and the Indian butchers who were waiting below cut off their arms and legs and flayed their faces, which they afterwards prepared like glove leather, with their beards on, and kept for their drunken festivals. Then they ate their flesh with a sauce of peppers and tomatoes. They sacrificed all our men in this way, eating their legs and arms, offering their hearts and blood to their idols, and throwing their trunks and entrails to the lions and tigers and serpents and snakes that they kept in the wild-beast houses.

"On seeing these atrocities, all of us in our camp said to one another: Thank God they did not carry me off to be sacrificed! My readers must remember that though we were not far off we could do nothing to help, and could only pray to God to guard us from such a death."

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Account of Fernando De Alva Ixtlilxóchitl

"On the second day after Pentecost, all the army having gathered in Texcoco, Cortés reviewed his Spanish troops and Ixtlilxóchitl reviewed his. In the whole army were two hundred thousand men and fifty thousand laborers to prepare bridges and do other necessary things. On the same day Tlaxcalans, Huexotzincans, and Cholulans also reviewed their troops, each lord with his vassals, and in all there were more than three hundred thousand men.

"The City of Texcoco and its kingdoms and provinces, which was the most important of all and had much power and strength, was on the side of the Christians together with Tlaxcala, Huexotzinco and Cholula. The latter were of less importance, since if Texcoco had not been on their side they would have been of no effect. And it is clear from the histories that the assistance which the Spaniards had from Texcoco was highly important. After God, it was by means of Ixtlilxóchitl and his brothers and relatives that the Christian law was planted.

"Now that everything was prepared and in a state of readiness, they left the City of Texcoco with all the army to go against Mexico. The sight of this splendid and powerful army as it went out of the city, and the way each general hastened with his troops toward the place to which they were assigned, was a thing of grandeur and one of the greatest ever seen in this land.

"Ixtlilxóchitl was with Cortés and the others ever since they left Texcoco. He was present in person during all the eighty days that the war against Mexico lasted, without missing a single one. He was the first on all occasions like a good captain, risking his life many times to free the Spaniards from their enemies the Aztecs. There were many occasions on which the Aztecs could have killed the Spaniards without leaving a single one, had it not been for him and his brothers, relatives and subjects. And since this prince was the greatest and most loyal friend Cortés had in this country, and after God it was with his help and favor that Cortés won, it astonishes me that he did not even tell of Ixtlilxóchitl nor of his exploits and great deeds to the writers and historians in order that they would not remain hidden, particularly since he was given no recompense. Rather, what was his and his ancestors' was taken from him, and not only this--the houses and the few pieces of land on which his descendants lived were not even left to them.

"Cortés and Ixtlilxóchitl after having heard mass went out of the camp with all their army by land and by water against Mexico. Those who were in the other camps did the same. At the first bridge the men of the army went across in the boats and canoes and attacked the enemies, winning the bridge and the fortifications, and followed them to another bridge which they had garrisoned. Our

people won it, although with great labor, and followed them from bridge to bridge until they arrived at the square. Ixtlilxóchitl ordered the twenty thousand laborers brought for that purpose to fill up these bridges and to prepare the bad passages. Cortés and Ixtlilxóchitl with their soldiers were busy here almost all of this day, and a very great many of the enemy died in the ambushes which were set for them, as well as some of ours.

"Among the many whom Ixtlilxóchitl killed that day was a very valiant captain, one of his relatives, whom he fought in the door of the great temple and from whom he took a Spanish sword which the captain had taken from a Spaniard he had killed some days before. At the same time, Ixtlilxóchitl fought with the general of the Aztecs, who was very brave and escaped with some wounds which were not mortal, fleeing to the palaces of his brother where he fortified himself with many of his captains. When the Aztecs saw that our people were returning to their camp they attacked them and killed many Tlaxcalans, because they were so loaded down with spoils and lagged behind.

"The following day before dawn, our people heard mass and went toward the city. But no matter how early they set out they found the bridges opened and many parts of the causeway broken, as the Aztecs were accustomed to doing. Cortés ordered the boats and the canoes from Texcoco and the other places to surround the city on all sides, to burn everything possible, and to kill or seize all the people they could. He and Ixtlilxóchitl with their army entered the city; they wanted to win the Street of Tacuba so as to be able to communicate with Captain Alvarado, which would be very useful. They set about it at the same time as Captains Alvarado and Sandoval, each winning as much as he could.

"The next day Cortés separated the people of his camp into three companies in order that they might go through the three streets that led to the main square. By one of them the leader of one of these companies entered with seventy Spaniards and eight horses, twenty thousand of Ixtlilxóchitl's people, and many laborers to fill the canals and bridges and to tear down houses. These people advanced to Tlaltelolco, but they left one bridge poorly closed. Cortés went after them, advancing with his people, and Ixtlilxóchitl stayed behind fighting with the Aztecs. When Cortés arrived, passing over the bad passage, he found the leader of this company fleeing and the rest dead. The royal standard was in the possession of the enemy, and some forty Spaniards had been captured by the enemy. Seeing the fury of the enemy Cortés also thought it well to flee. When they arrived at the bad passage they did not dare pass over it except by throwing themselves in the water, and some were seized.

"Ixtlilxóchitl, who arrived at that point, ordered his soldiers to hold back the enemy and hurried forward, gave his hand to Cortés and took him out of the water. One of the enemy was just about to cut off Cortés' head, and Ixtlilxóchitl cut off the warrior's arms; this has been falsely attributed to certain Spaniards. But the true occurrence was painted on the main door of the church of the Monastery of Santiago Tlaltelolco, although a certain monk who must have been a relative of Olea afterwards ordered that it be painted differently, putting Olea as the one who cut off the arms of the man who sought to seize or kill Cortés, and Ixtlilxóchitl as the one who pulled him out of the water. Be that as it may, Ixtlilxóchitl freed Cortés and scolded him much for having gone ahead and not accepting his opinion that he should never go forward alone or without many friends.

"They arrived as best they could at their camp with a loss of more than two thousand allies and forty Spaniards who had been taken prisoners and who that day were sacrificed in the main temple of Tlaltelolco, not counting another three that they burned, and more than thirty who were wounded. This was fateful day.

"All that night Cortés and Ixtlilxóchitl and their people were very sad and in pain, because Cortés was also wounded in the leg. The Aztecs were very happy at the signal victory they had that day, and nearly all the night they did not sleep from happiness. They danced, built great fires on the tops of the temples and the houses, played trumpets and drums, and gave other signs of joy."

Reprinted from Ally of Cortes, by Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxóchitl, trans. Douglass K. Ballentine (El Paso: Texas Western Press) by permission of the publisher (c) Copyright 1969.

Handout #3E

IMPACT QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What are the main points of the historical account that you read?_____

_____

_____

_____

2. Is there any information that you feel is missing in the account, and that you feel you need to know in order to get "the total picture"?

Yes_____

No_____

If yes, what's missing?_____

_____

_____

_____

3. What do you think are absolutely true statements about this historical account?_____

_____

_____

_____

4. Define a factual statement?_____

_____

_____

_____

5. List at least two factual statements in the account that you read._____

_____

_____

_____

6. Define a value statement?_____

_____

_____

_____

7. List at least two value statements that are present in the account that you read:_____

_____

_____

_____

8. What reasons could this author have to use value statements in his account?_____

_____

_____

_____

9. Does the account that you read come from a primary document?

_____

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the things that both Diaz and De Alva agree happened during the conquest? _____

_____

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2. What are some ways in which their accounts disagree?

_____

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3. Both of the two men claimed to be telling the "true history" of the conquest. How is it possible that each could be telling the "true history" and yet have differing accounts?

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4. Suppose that you are a historian trying to reconstruct a picture of what happened in the conquest of Mexico. After reading the two accounts, answer this question: How was it possible for a handful of Spaniards to conquer the Aztec empire? _____

_____

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_____

5. Do you think it would be helpful if you could read accounts by other people besides De Alva and Diaz? If so, what accounts would you like to read?

6. Why is it important that a historian read more than one account of any particular event?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the things that both Diaz and De Alva agree happened during the conquest?
Both Diaz and De Alva relate the same general course of events. They both said that Cortés reviewed his troops, that they attacked the Aztecs along the causeways, that the channels were filled, that they had a difficult fight, and that at one point the Spanish were defeated, many were taken prisoners and sacrificed, and that Cortés was almost captured.

2. What are some ways in which their accounts disagree?
The principal difference between the two accounts lies in who was responsible for the strategies of attack. According to Bernal Diaz del Castillo, it was the Spaniards, and according to De Alva, it was the Indians. Their accounts differ also in some details, such as the number of Spaniards who were captured and sacrificed, who rescued Cortés, and whether the Indian allies fled or acted bravely in the time of crisis. Discuss with students the different overall impression that the two accounts give, which comes not so much from disagreement as from different emphasis. Thus, Diaz tells only about Cortés reviewing his Spanish troops, who were comparatively few in number, while De Alva also described the Indian captains reviewing the large numbers of the Indian allies. Diaz describes with horror the sacrifice of his Spanish companions, while De Alva merely mentions that this occurred. Diaz describes the difficult fighting that he participated in, while De Alva describes the bravery of Ixtlilxóchitl.

3. Both of the two men claimed to be telling the "true history" of the conquest. How is it possible that each could be telling the "true history" and yet have differing accounts?
Each man was telling the "true history" as he understood it. Their accounts do not always agree because they use different sources and wrote from different points of view. De Alva's account represents a secondary document since he did not observe or participate in the events he narrates.

4. Suppose that you are a historian trying to reconstruct a picture of what happened in the conquest of Mexico. After reading the two accounts, answer this question: How was it possible for a handful of Spaniards to conquer the Aztec empire?
The Spanish had experience in combat. Although their present quest was commercial in nature (without formal military organization) these men were well organized and disciplined. Moreover, they gained support from many Indian allies. Some things that are not so obvious in the accounts are the superiority of the Spanish weapons, their ability to manipulate and convince Indian groups to fight against the Aztecs and their success in blockading the city and cutting off its food supply.

5. Do you think it would be helpful if you could read accounts by other people besides De Alva and Diaz? If so, what accounts would you like to read?
Yes. Students could mention various accounts such as those by Cortés, by the Aztecs, by other Indian allies, and by other Spanish soldiers, especially if they are primary sources.

6. Why is it important that a historian read more than one account of any particular event?
Historians have a better opportunity to understand what actually took place if they read more than one account of a particular event. They can then weigh different personal biases and strive toward an objective account.

LESSON FOUR: EVALUATION EXERCISES

Objectives

Students will:

- analyze a document from multiple perspectives.
- analyze the biases in written or pictorial documents.
- through a drawing, essay, or short story, express their knowledge of what it means to be biased or to have a point of view.

Time: One class period.

Materials

Cartoons, newspapers, and magazine articles (optional)

Introduction

This lesson is provided for teachers who wish to evaluate student progress. Creative and analytical exercises are offered so that you may tailor the evaluation to meet students' strengths. All of the suggestions listed below demand an application of key concepts (e.g., bias, point of view) to new material. You may decide to use one or several of the activities.

Suggestions for Evaluation

1. Have students analyze a political cartoon from different perspectives. In particular, you may want to ask students to identify the cartoonist's point of view. How is this point of view expressed? What kind of people would object to this point of view (e.g., Democrats, Republicans, religious or ethnic groups)? What would their points of view be?

2. Creative or artistic students may choose to draw a political cartoon expressing a point of view. Along with the cartoon, students should identify their point of view and the kinds of people who may disagree with it.

3. Have students analyze a newspaper article. In their analyses students should a) ascertain the reporter's biases; b) explain how others may view the situation differently; c) highlight primary and secondary resources used in the article; d) rewrite the article being sensitive to both points of view.

4. Have students analyze several newspaper and/or magazine articles. Working in small groups, students should collect articles about a particular incident or topic. In particular, high-drama stories would be good for this exercise. (Remember the rumored

death tolls from the Chernobyl nuclear reactor incident.) Stocked with a collection of articles, students should write their own newspaper or magazine articles stating what they think actually happened. (Remind students that they do not need to hold one point of view, but instead could point out several plausible arguments.)

5. Some students may wish to write a short story that expresses two different points of view. For example, two detectives may view the same facts of a murder case differently. Or, a scenario in which alien beings try to decide why the earth exploded could prove fruitful for students who prefer science fiction. Imaginative writers should like this general exercise.

PRONUNCIATION KEY

ä	father, bother
ā	say, date
ē	meat, seat
ō	hope, bone
ū	rule, youth
zh	measure, seizure

Alvarado, Pedro de	äl bä rä dō, pā drō, dā
Cempoala	zhām pōä lä
Cholula	chō lū lä
De Alva Ixtlilxóchitl	dā, äl vä, ēx tlē sō chē tl
De Olea, Cristóbal	dā, ōlā ä, krēs tō bäl
Díaz del Castillo, Bernal	dē äzh, dāl, käs tē yō, bār näl
Huexotzinco	ūa jō tzēn gō
Iztlaxihuatl	ēs tlä sēē ūätl
Malinche	mä lēn chā
Moctezuma	mōc tā sū mä
Popocatépetl	pō pō cä tā pätl
Quetzalcóatl	kät zäl kō ätl
Tenochtitlán	tā nōch tē tlän
Texcoco	täs kō kō
Tlaltelolco	tläl tā lōl cō
Tlaxcalan	tläs cä län

BACKGROUND READINGS AND RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

DE ALVA IXTLILXOCHITL, FERNANDO
Ally of Cortes
El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1968

DIAZ DEL CASTILLO, Bernal
The Discovery of the Conquest of Mexico
London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1963

GALEANO, EDUARDO
Memory of Fire: Part 1, Genesis
U.S.: Pantheon Books, 1985

KEEN, B., and WASSERMAN, M.
A Short History of Latin America
Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1980

LAFAYE, Jacques
Quetzalcóatl y Guadalupe: La Formación de la Conciencia Nacional en México
Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1977
(Also found in English from the University of Chicago Press.)

LEON-PORTILLA, Miguel
The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico
Boston: Beacon Press, 1966

People and Civilizations: A World History
Ginn and Company, Editors
U.S., 1977

Smith, Bradley
Mexico: A History in Art
New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1968

MODEL CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Teachers in California might find it useful to note that this unit meets the following Model Curriculum Standards developed by the California State Department of Education. The highlighted standard represents the most salient aspect of this unit.

<u>World History, Culture, and Geography</u>

3. ...The course should strive...to present the history of the West in a world context, stressing the developing interrelations between Western societies and other peoples.

5. ...It should show how historians and social scientists sift evidence to arrive at an approximation of the truth; and it should give students an understanding of analytical concepts with which they can more effectively interpret, compare, criticize, and question the important issues of both the past and the present.

7. ...should emphasize the relationships among cultures.

12. ...should indicate the varieties of social order in historical contexts.

17. ...should indicate the role of cultural perspectives, such as ethnocentrism, xenophobia and racism, in the historical development of interrelationships among people and cultures.

21. ...should provide opportunities for students to develop basic, creative and critical thinking, and interpersonal or social participation skills.

CURRICULUM UNIT EVALUATION FORM

School District: _____

1. Subjects you teach: _____

2. Grade levels: _____

3. Years of teaching experience: _____

4. Title of unit: _____

5. Author(s): _____

6. How did you come across this unit?:

purchased it____from_____
borrowed it _____from_____
was given to me_____from_____

7. What subject did you use the unit for?: _____

8. What grade level did you use the unit for?: _____

9. How much of the unit did you use?:
   a) all of it _____
   b) one lesson _____
   c) two lessons _____
   d) three lessons _____
   e) four lessons _____
   f) none of it _____

10. Indicate how you used the materials in classroom teaching (check all that apply). Please also indicate how you will use the materials In the future.

Use of Educational Materials	I have used the materials	I will use the materials
not at all		
during class lesson		
for special projects		
for classroom display		
as classroom reference		
for own background		
for homework assignments		
for inservice workshops		
other		

11. What, if any, textbook did you use with this unit: _____
_____

12. Did you encounter any problems in using the unit with your textbook?

____yes ____no

13. Explain:_____
_____
_____
_____

14. If you did not use the material, why not? (check all that apply).

a) not covering this topic in class _____
b) not enough time to incorporate _____
c) inappropriate for my class(es) _____
d) didn't like the type of activities _____
e) didn't like the content of the lessons _____
f) other (be specific) _____

15. If you checked **b,c,d,e,**or **f** please explain:_____
_____
_____
_____

16. If you used one or more of the activities, did you:

a) follow the procedures? _____
b) adapt activities moderately? _____
c) adapt activities significantly? _____

17. If you choose **b** or **c** please explain:_____
_____
_____
_____

18. How clear were the following (rank from **1 = very clear to 5 = very unclear)**?

Procedures _____
Handouts _____
Answer Sheets _____
Directions for students _____

19. Rank the following parts from 1 = **most useful to 5 = least useful.**

	Useful to you personally	Useful to your class
Introduction		
Pronunciation key		
Lesson 1		
Lesson 2		
Lesson 3		
Lesson 4		
Visual aids		
Suggested readings		

20. How appropriate were the following? (**rank from 1 = very appropriate to 5 = very inappropriate**)

		Comments:
Suggested grade level	_____	_____
Suggested time for activities	_____	_____
Content of the activities	_____	_____
Overall objectives	_____	_____
Evaluations	_____	_____
Definitions of words	_____	_____

21. What part of the unit did you like the best? Why?_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

22. What part of the unit did you like the least? Why?_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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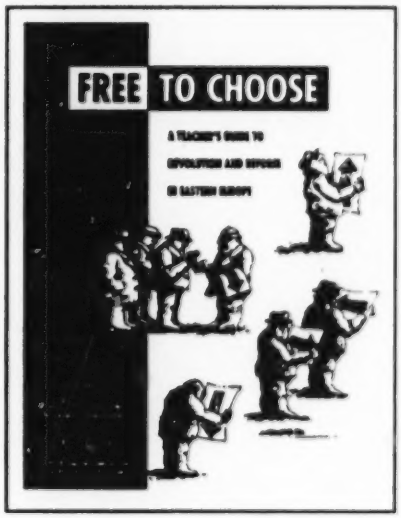

Economics, civics, English/language arts, foreign language, US history and world history teachers from both elementary and secondary schools will find our material useful. We grant classroom permission to reproduce handouts. Each one- to three-week unit is self-contained and provides teachers with the readings, black line masters, reproducible handouts, slides, videos, and background materials necessary for instruction. Many one-day lessons can be used separately or together with the teacher's standard curriculum. Our free catalog describes SPICE's more than 60 units, ranging topically from cooperation in Japanese culture (elementary) to the geography of Latin America for (7-12, Spanish and English) and contemporary Soviet-American relations (9-12).

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